

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 were pending in this application. Claims 2 and 3 are cancelled. Claims 1, 4, and 6-8 are amended. New claims 9-18 are added. No new subject matter is believed to have been added by these amendments. Therefore, claims 1 and 4-18 remain in this application.

New claims 9-18 have been added by this Amendment. New claim 9 depends from and adds further limitations to amended claim 6. New claim 10 is independent, and new claims 11-14 depend therefrom. New claims 15 and 16 depend directly or indirectly from and add further limitations to amended claim 1. New claims 17 and 18 depend directly or indirectly from and add further limitations to amended claim 6. No new matter was added. Support for new claims 9-18 can be found in the specification and drawings as originally filed. Claims 9-18 are also believed to be allowable over the prior art of record.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application JP 03-004714. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections.

The '714 reference is directed to a push-type lawn mower including a grass-collecting container. In order to discharge the grass clippings from the container, the grass catcher is pulled off of the duct of the lawn mower and carried to a grass clippings dumping area. This is done manually by an operator.

In contrast, according to amended claim 6, the present invention is directed to a riding-type lawn mower in which the grass collecting apparatus is connected to the riding mower and stays attached during the dumping operation.

Furthermore, amended claims 1 and 6 of the present invention define that the first axis for swinging the grass catcher extends to be associated with the upper edge of the gate-shaped frame and the second axis for tilting the bottom plate extends to be associated with the lower edge of the gate-shaped frame. The grass catcher and the bottom plate are swingable to be interlocked with each other about the first and second axes, respectively. During swinging, the grass catcher is mechanically displaced away from the gate-shaped frame into a grass discharging position with the opening of the grass catcher directed downward. The bottom plate is displaced toward the gate-shaped frame.

These features are not taught or suggested in the '714 reference. In the '714 reference, the bottom plate 25a stays attached to the gate-shaped frame 25b and, therefore, cannot tilt to change its position relative to the gate-shaped frame 25b (Fig. 5). Since the grass catcher 10 tilts to change its position, relative to the gate-shaped frame 25b, around an axis extending in association with a lower edge of the gate-shaped frame (Fig. 5), a first axis for swinging the grass catcher 10 extending in association with an upper edge of the gate-shaped frame is not disclosed.

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicants believe that the subject matter of amended independent claims 1 and 6 is not anticipated by the '714 reference. Reconsideration of the rejections of claims 1 and 6 is respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 5, 7, and 8 depend from and add further limitations to amended independent claim 1 or 6 (or a subsequent dependent claim) and are believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed hereinabove in connection with amended independent claims 1 and 6. Reconsideration of the rejections of claims 4, 5, 7, and 8 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of claims 1 and 4-18 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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